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“Common Soldiers, the Army and the Making of Empire in the Seven-Years’ War”

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Karl Marx asserted in *Capital*: “Force is the midwife of every old society pregnant with a new one. It is itself an economic power.” He was referring in particular to the actions taken by the state that contributed to the process he termed “the so-called primitive accumulation” in which capital and labor initially formed. In Britain, he addressed enclosure legislation, the vagrancy and poor law acts, and wage and anti-combination measures, the whole coercive apparatus that laid the infrastructure of capitalism; in the colonies, the expropriation and elimination of indigenous peoples in the New World, and the enslavement and transshipment of Africans. Such “brute force,” Marx affirmed, “employ the power of the State.” Yet the courts, customs collectors and colonial officials constituted but implied threats. Ultimate force came in the form of military and paramilitary action. This paper departs from Marx’s observations to explore the army’s role in the transition to capitalism and place state-sponsored armed conflict in the context of imperial aggrandizement in the interests of merchant capital.

The Early Modern era witnessed what historians of warfare have called a military revolution, involving relatively swift technological and organizational innovation and marked growth in the scale and intensity of armed conflict, developments which had profound implications for both state and society. Often discussed in curiously bloodless terms of military innovation or state formation, military revolution actually was part and parcel of the very bloody enterprise of primitive accumulation through the pacification of the general populace, the subordination of feudal or regional opponents to state power, and the conquest of formerly autonomous states or pre-state polities. Empire comprised the larger theater of military revolution, where imperial state formation occurred at the expense of soldiers, indigenous peoples and colonists. The war machine provided the force necessary to the creation of international capital and its protection within the imperial sphere.

Too often warfare is seen as an autonomous process detached from material forces. There is
no doubt that the nature of military conflict stands apart. Warfare’s disregard for human life isolates soldiering as an occupation at the extreme flank of laboring life. This dependence on state-sponsored killing necessitates the legitimization of military conflict in terms religious, racial, ethnic and nationalistic. Militarism mystifies itself thus, obscuring the expropriation of labor and expenditure of human life to its all too material ends. War is work. The paid labor of soldiers aggregated contributed directly to the political economic project of the imperial state. War assisted in the primitive accumulation of capital requisite to British industrialization, the forging of commercial empire, the expropriation or enslavement of indigenous peoples and their territories, the international migrations of labor, and the securing of the whole. Soldiers’ Herculean labors must be understood in relation to the experiences of other laborers at this time; i.e. in terms of proletarianization, work discipline, class formation and class conflict. Moreover, warfare not only fabricated empire, but also contributed to the construction of gender, ethnic and racial identities so crucial to imperialism as models of differentiation and subordination.

In this paper I will focus on the British military in the Seven Years’ War, a seminal period in Anglo-American history, when the British Empire came of age, and the seeds were sown for anti-imperialist revolts by Native Americans and American colonists. I shall address the war from three perspectives: military revolution and the imperial state; the military labor process (what my colleague Larry McDonnell and I call warwork); and the subordination of indigenous and settler populations, as well as the discourses of difference that facilitated the resulting colonial condition.

**Military Revolution and the Accumulative Imperial State**

Michael Duffy observed that, “the governments of Ancien Régime Europe were really giant war-making machines devoting their main efforts to the maintenance of large armed forces.” This
situation arose in relation to the so-called military revolution, a concept pioneered by Michael Roberts in 1955 (which he centered on the years 1560-1660). Much of the writing on the military revolution absorbs itself with discussions of how advances in military science and technology resulted in an escalation of the scale of warfare and the involvement of state and society in war making.iii Geoffrey Parker updated and globalized the concept, arguing that fortification, firepower, and swelling numbers of armies comprised of the revolution allowed western powers to dominate the world.iv While there is debate on the exact timing of the military revolution, there is broad agreement on its importance.v

The military revolution idea also addresses the impact of the escalation in armed conflict on modern state formation.vi The new requirements of warfare caused political changes leading to the development of the modern state in the eighteenth century, and laying the foundations of economic development. The growth in the size and professionalism of standing armies in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—increasing tenfold in just 200 yearsvii—necessitated an expansion in the state apparatus to maintain and finance the military. The state emerged to service the military and the military waxed in strength to protect the nurturing state, a relationship that in most cases led to absolutist rule and the privileging of a military caste. England constituted an exception, most argue, managing both to maintain powerful combined military and naval forces, and to develop the most liberal of governing systems.viii

John Brewer refutes the view that the military was not a dominant force in British society. Instead, he proposes the model of “the fiscal-military state,” by which he means a state whose main function is to wage war and whose fiscal policy and administrative apparatus is geared to that end. According to Brewer: “War was an economic as well as a military activity: its causes, conduct and consequences as much a matter of money as martial prowess.”ix From the late 17th through the 18th centuries Britain would wage war repeatedly with France and her allies, with
Britain’s army and navy growing by 300 percent. The state also had to construct a support infrastructure.³ Needless to say, it entailed great expense. Military spending accounted for 10-15% of national income during major wars.⁴ Britain was able to fund its expanding military commitments by sharply increasing taxation, engaging in “public deficit finance (a national debt)” in an unprecedented fashion, and creating an administrative structure for military and fiscal needs.⁵ The Treasury emerged after the Restoration as the controlling body over government expenditure and tax collection, particularly of customs, excise and the land tax.⁶

Other than tax collection, the utilization of public debt constituted the other key to funding the fiscal-military state. Public debt in this period transformed from short-term debt to long-term borrowing. Debt rose quickly during war, meaning often a discounting of government bills, thus making it harder to secure credit. The solution was to convert this short-term liability to long-term funded debt in the form of interest-bearing stocks to be paid for from indirect taxes (i.e. customs, excise and stamp duties) determined by parliament.⁷ Thus, from 1688-1714, the British state transformed into a fiscal-military state with elevated taxation, sophisticated government administration, a standing army, and the desire to be a major European power.⁸

The literature on the military revolution, for all its differences, agrees on the central role of war in the formation of states. A strong tendency exists to treat warfare as a closed loop of advances in military technique and technology and corollary state development. From one perspective, the military revolution arises sui generis, cultured by the battlefield and logistical needs. From another, state formation precipitates martial innovation through its defense requirements. Yet both posit a process that operates at a level divorced from the main historical actors—the soldiers—and in some instances from the social and economic transformations making Europe modern, nor does the imperial setting receive much attention.⁹ Yet the fiscal-military state derived in large part from colonial sources. England’s exploration and settlement
of new territories necessitated military support, fuelling growth in armies and navies that required unprecedented amounts of capital, which colonial trade provided through customs collection and taxation of the wealth generated, while the state apparatus grew in size and activity as a means of managing the military, trade and colonies. Not only did the fiscal-military state have its roots in the colonies, it would reach its logical fulfillment there in the form of militarily dominated dependencies productive of the economic resources requisite to the perpetuation of the fiscal-military state at home. Towards this end, Britain exported the military revolution to the New World, with the Seven Years’ War the sea changing event.

Historians have characterized the empire in the 17th and 18th centuries as commercial in nature, a broad and loosely connected mercantile market ultimately made more systematic by what Daniel Baugh calls Britain’s “blue-water” policy. The main tenets of this policy were: the defense of Britain received first priority; naval control of the English Channel and the North Sea constituted the basic military objective; trade and shipping were the keys to paying for defense and providing the infrastructure to naval prowess; and colonies were important insomuch as they contributed to trade. The "Atlantic system" that began to take shape under this blue-water policy required a large navy and a growing bureaucracy to pay for it by managing taxation. Baugh calls this empire a "maritime-imperial system" in that it was based on maritime commerce rather than the acquisition of new territories.

Britain’s policy had always been to allow the colonies largely to defend themselves, valuing them more for their exports than their territories, and relying on the Royal Navy to keep the sea lanes of commerce clear for the flow of commodities. Anemic bodies of troops were placed at vital nodal points in the American colonies, and in times of emergency could be fleshed out by calling out the militia, or, if absolutely necessary, dispatching modest infusions of regular soldiers. But the stakes of empire building had risen by the mid-18th century, involving control
of the American interior, its crucial resources, land and furs, and indigenous peoples. It was at this point that the military landscape of North America, in fact British colonial policy and the nature of the Empire, began to change. The prior state of affairs, in which colonies and proprietary companies were expected largely to manage and pay for their own defense would be supplanted by an imperial policy whereby standing armies in the colonies would perform these duties in a fashion that was more answerable to political officials in London. The army’s red coat would become a more striking signifier of imperial rule than the navy’s blue jacket.

The Seven Years’ War constituted an important catalyst to these processes. The War marked a significant turning point in the nature of Empire from being distinctly commercial to being increasingly territorial. Two decisions undergirded this transformation: the unprecedented commitment of tens of thousands of troops to the American theater; and the stationing of a standing army in North America at war’s end to protect the new acquisitions. The army was an essential player in the winning of this territorial empire, and the empire was increasingly dependent on the army for its defense. The military revolution that had transformed European warfare and the nature of the state was exported to the New World. In terms of the numbers of troops mobilized, the scale of combat, and the massive investment in army supply and building of military infrastructure, this was warfare as yet unseen in the Americas. With the Seven Years’ War, Britain’s “military-fiscal state” became territorially imperialistic.

Thus, Lawrence Gipson a half century ago accurately denoted this conflict the Great War for the Empire, but whereas he emphasized Britain’s altruism in its defense of fellow Britons from the French threat, from our vantage point the war can be more clearly distinguished as an attempt to advance English power through the expansion of the British Empire, making it more exactly a great war for empire. The Seven Years’ War principally concerned the acquisition of territories, raw materials, peoples, and markets in the Americas, in India and on the west coast of
Africa; that is the primitive accumulation of economic resources that would make England the leading industrial producer for the next century and more.

**Common Soldiers**

Traditional imperial history tends to be written from above on such topics as governance, war, and trade policy, whereas the new imperial history adopts a subaltern approach, centering on indigenous peoples, slaves, transported Europeans, and imperial cultural products. Soldiers, I argue, provide a link between such histories from above and below, as they are both instruments and objects of imperial authority. As members of armies engaged in warfare of acquisition and defense, builders of forts and members of garrison enforcing British sovereignty, they were the myrmidons of expansive commercial and territorial imperialism founded upon the expropriation of land and labor, production and distribution of staple commodities, and consumption of finished goods within an international market. As individuals enticed or enjoined from diverse ethnic and economic backgrounds into an occupation ripe with danger and jacketed with restricting discipline, soldiers were expropriated labor yoked to imperial design, alienated from civil society, and bracketed at the bottom of the social structure.

For all the attention focused on civil/martial interstices as well as the social life of common soldiers, the new military history has done little on the subject of soldiers as workers. By the mid-eighteenth century, soldiers were drawn from early capitalist societies where paid labor was increasingly common. Their class experience thus began before enlistment, but it is with mobilization that their formation as military labor begins. The regular army in America peaked at 23 regiments, or roughly 25,000 regulars in 1761, a quite sizable military force mostly composed of recent recruits. Enlisting meant joining the ranks of wage laborers. For those that came from the land or the crafts, it was a true experience of losing the means of production; even
for those entering from another form of paid labor, it usually meant induction to a more exacting form of work. The British army in the Seven Years’ War was made up not primarily of professional soldiers, but by ordinary people drawn from their homes either through dwindling opportunity there or by the lure of the bounty money secured with enlistment. Army recruits brought with them skills and notions of customary obligations imbedded in economic exchange, as well as a tradition of plebeian resistance to perceived incursions on customary rights.

Once on the job as soldiers they encountered a form of wage work that involved its own labor processes and social relations of production. A troop’s martial labor comprised training in the skills of soldiering, and applying those skills in defensive and aggressive situations such as digging entrenchments and fighting itself. Warfare’s basic objective entailed killing one's opponent. Wounds and death were also the wages of war for soldiers. Alienation in this instance meant not only a metaphorical loss of selfhood, but for many actual physical loss or negation. Yet, combat was but one aspect of a soldier's working life. More routine were the many "fatigues" required to keep a fighting machine functioning. Troops cleared sites for camps, dug trenches and latrines, laid roads, cut wood for palisades, erected fortifications and barracks and cleaned grounds—the building materials of empire—receiving in return a wage of 8d. per diem, which had been set in 1660 and remained at this level until the late eighteenth century.xxvi Soldiers also performed civil labor—cutting wood, hunting for food, harvesting crops, hauling provisions—warranting extraordinary payments. The army also required many types of skilled work and men from with ranks with past experience as tailors, shoemakers and weavers all found work servicing the army. The pay for both common and skilled labor varied for much of the War, but tended to be 6d. per day for common labor and 1s. for skilled work, more than matching their income as soldiers.
The shared experience of military labor, not to mention the cohesion drummed into a fighting force, produced social integration, making for subaltern garrison communities, both separate from and intertwined with the military power structure.\textsuperscript{xxvii} Separated from society into a demimonde of barracks, military camps and garrisons, living and fighting together, dressed in the same clothing and sharing the same food, troops developed their own active social life defined by commonplace transactions of shared toil and after-hours conviviality.\textsuperscript{xxviii}

Soldiers did not uniformly compose garrison and camp communities, which acquired trains of people dependent upon or profiting from the military: women and children, family to the troop; colonial laborers, contractors, petty merchants, chaplains, scouts and rangers; and Native Americans. However, the military was a male-dominated sphere, the sexual demographic in the army always grossly weighted toward men. The age demographic likewise deviated from mainstream society, with young single males dominating. When forged to soldiers’ violent mission, reinforced by the prevalence of weapons, and inflamed by a surfeit of alcohol, this sex-age orientation impregnated camps with violence. Soldier society also distinguished itself from most settled civilian communities by its transient nature. Social interaction occurred across time and space, as the very dynamic of wartime military life in an imperial setting necessitated mobility, making for ephemeral community life. It is not surprising, then, that, as well as camaraderie, conviviality, and a modicum of domesticity, camp culture also hosted alcohol abuse, violence and criminality, making for a volatile social mix. The very organization of the military—into messes, companies, battalions, regiments—nonetheless produced a sense of belonging to groups that ameliorated the social peculiarities of martial life.

Yet the army constituted a hierarchical power structure that wielded extensive authority over most aspects of its men’s lives. Soldiers came from the common people, whereas those commanding hailed from middling people, the gentry and nobles. As orders generally applied to
living and working conditions, provision of food and shelter, and actual physical well-being, class conflict naturally fructified. Military discipline also functioned as work discipline, and undisciplined behavior on the part of soldiers embodied resistance to that discipline. While the military's emphasis on obedience reinforced the deference expected of laboring people, soldiering also bred a strong sense of fraternity, a camaraderie forged by the nature of their work and the unequal power relationships structuring it, which the issuing of orders and enforcement of discipline by superiors daily reiterated. Thus, by grappling with their subordination, soldiers approached a sense of shared identity, an incipient class consciousness. They accommodated themselves to their difficult life by following orders, but also by drinking, carousing, fighting, and thieving. They resisted by shirking their duties, disobeying orders, petitioning against improper treatment, refusing to work, deserting, and mutinying. Insubordination pervaded the eighteenth century army and collective action periodically threatened. This class struggle reached its apogee in the wake of the war when the army’s attempt to redefine the terms of the military labor contract resulted in a general mutiny that spanned the British possessions in North America, making for pervasive subaltern resistance in the truest sense of the term.

**The Colonial Condition**

Warfare impacts culturally as much as politically or economically, military conflict being a crucible of social identity. Established normative views guide the movement to war and shape the social construction of the army, while the resulting cultural interaction gives rise to new or altered understandings of other groups. This interaction took place on a number of planes in the Seven Years’ War, as Europeans, Euro-Americans, and Native Americans, women as well as men, made and broke connections, as culture war paralleled armed conflict.
The army was built upon patriarchal assumptions about social order. First, it operated within entrenched lines of gender expectations, with soldiering deemed a male occupation by nature and warfare an elevated test of manhood. Women did not factor into military logic or, ideally, practice. Military history has subconsciously accepted this gendered logic, and there has been little exploration of the ways in which notions of gender have impacted on warfare and molded camp life. This neglect is surprising given the fact that, despite the marked variability of both gender models and forms of warfare over time and between cultures, a universal gendering of war is apparent: almost without exception men have done the fighting in wars, while women have been relegated to spectators, victims, or, at most, military support roles. This reality, the designation of warfare as a masculine pursuit, is the constitutive aspect of war’s engendering. Masculinity and femininity are related less to the actual implied physiologies of men and women, however, than to what they constitute with regard to the “military mandate.” The military’s unique nature as an apparatus of state-sponsored killing leads to its separation from civilian society. Its members are distinguished from the general population, a collective aggressive character cultivated, and their special mission elevated over individual or civilian interests. This process of physical and normative severance is informed and validated by gender discourse, with masculinity collapsed with the military and femininity with the civilian (or enemy). In this way, the violence essential to warfare is naturalized and enabled. The military thus is not invested in gender distinctions primarily to privilege men over women, but appropriates such ideological privileging to facilitate the large-scale violence deemed so crucial the interests of the state. In the Seven Years’ War, therefore, gender differentiation was marshaled to the cause of vanquishing the French and establishing a grander territorial empire.

The army also sought to entrench gender difference within the camps. Conceiving of the feminine as corrupting of discipline and parasitical of resources, the army downplayed the
existence of women, as their presence in this masculine world did not make sense within contemporary understandings of gender, a denial that has pervaded much military history. Acting on this conception, officers sought to limit strictly the number of women who could officially attach themselves to the regiments and to police those women who on their own accord followed the camps. Such actions suppressed the female presence but never came close to creating the ideal homosocial universe of masculine warlike endeavor. For the reality was that the army depended upon women to perform a range of service functions, such as nursing and laundressing, which enabled the reproduction of warfare.

Not only did gender notions provide a means of severing military men from society, but also, models of family governance, particularly the relationship of father and son, supplied a ready-made language of natural subordination. Officers constituted the patriarchs, soldiers the dependent children and servants of the domestic unit subjugated thoroughly to the will of their paternal commanders. The patriarchal army articulated the chain of command in terms of this discourse both as a means to reinforce discipline, but also to classify soldiers as other than civil beings, in this way denying them certain rights and subjecting them to a different legal code, making them dependents stripped of individual will, thus ideal soldiers better prepared to engage in deadly armed combat. Legitimization for their subordination came from treating them as perennially young males who had not achieved their majority. The reward for soldiers came in the form of a masculinity of heroic dimension ascribed to them. Manliness comprised the psychological wage granted soldiers who in reality were largely denied most other things that defined a man in this period—a certain freedom of sexual expression, unhindered family life, economic independence, and spatial mobility. Patriarchal norms thus were appropriated both to separate men from mainstream heterosocial society to create a “gender” or “class” of soldiers,
and to subject male warriors to a hierarchical command structure naturalized by the age and rank hierarchies imbedded in partriarchy.

Ethnic or national identities, more malleable than gender, take shape and form alloys in the heat of battle. Current theory in ethnic studies stresses the social construction of ethnicity, seen as arising from cultural interaction with other groups, often through emigration experience. Warfare is another determinative process in the construction of ethnic identities. One needs the “other” to wage war with psychological release from the taboo of murder, while hierarchies of ethnic types facilitate the assertion of dominance over dependent peoples so necessary in the imperial setting. Regional, cultural, linguistic, and religious particularities—the baggage of ethnicity—have always functioned as means of such differentiation. Conversely, new synthetic identities can be minted to integrate a fighting force and construct *nouveau* imperial identities. Mobilizing the army to fight the Seven Years’ War entailed drawing people together from different countries or regions with varying social and religious norms into a polyglot, culturally heterogeneous whole. The patriotic idea of the Briton, a faux consciousness, emerged as a concept meant to integrate what was in fact a heterogeneous citizenry composed in part of Scots and Irish, peoples themselves forcibly wedded to the English state by warfare. In these ways, the army wielded ethnic identification as a dual-edged weapon within the larger struggle to create a territorial empire for the imperial state.

Within the military different nationalities both mixed freely and, particularly in the case of Highland Scots and Germans, collected into ethnic clusters that sought to perpetuate native identities. The English born accounted for under a third of the North American regular army, with Scots and Irish each just slightly less in number, while continental Europeans constituted a twentieth. Colonists made up five per cent of their numbers in 1757, while foreign-born residents of America constituted just slightly more. This distribution usually did not apply
on the regimental basis, as few regiments had an even spread of ethnic groups, and particular ethnic groups clearly dominated certain regiments, with the Scots offering the clearest evidence for ethnic clustering.\textsuperscript{xxxv} Whether interacting with different types of people, or celebrating one’s own ethnic identity, as in the celebrations attending St. George’s and St. Patrick’s days, discourses of difference were constructed or reinforced. Little evidence exists pointing to the creation of an overarching soldier identity as a “Briton.” The war’s effect involved, more so, the creation of imperial identities. A dominant Britishness purports an internal integrity to the Empire that did not in fact exist. At the same time, England needed subordinate national identities, both to include in the imperial project undeniably distinct peoples, but also to remind these colonized peoples that they remained apart from the English, who subordinated and incorporated them into the Kingdom or Empire, and who remained their cultural and political superiors.

The other allies with whom the army had closest contact were the American colonists. Historians have long pointed to the friction that developed between the army and colonial assemblies and citizens alike during the war as an important component in the development of an American national character.\textsuperscript{xxxvi} Tensions were generated over such issues as the induction of indentured servants into the service, quartering of troops, provisioning of the army, and disputes over the rank of provincial army officers in relation to regular officers. The matter of recruiting particularly rankled colonials. The army enlisted servants, apprentices and craftsmen at the expense of masters, while the recruiting of free men distorted the colonial labor market. Ostensibly un-tethered workers, recruits tended to be young men with important familial and community ties, with economic responsibilities to parents or employers, and enlistment in the regulars usually meant a loss of their labor to these networks for years. One should not overstate these differences, though, as Pitt’s promise to cover much of the colonial expenses and the series
of army victories dating from 1758 did much to soothe British-American tensions. Nonetheless, there is no doubting the fact that “British” and “American” soldiers viewed one another as different, which cultured affairs in the broader imperial relationship in which the army, as the overarching British governing structure during the war, played a central role. The real beginning of the rupture between the two dates to the end of the war, however, and Parliamentary decisions taken on how to deal with the newly enlarged empire. Colonial revolt would form but the most prominent current in a wave of subaltern resistance against the now militant empire.

Imperial expansion inevitably brought the British army into contact with aboriginal peoples. The Seven Years’ War involved a struggle over who would control North America’s wealth. Indians were intimately involved in the conflict, fighting for their own interests, allying to one or the other of the European powers, and even when remaining neutral. Their war was not about empire-building but was fought to, at the least, maintain the status quo ante, a delicate balance of British, French, Euro-American and Amerindian interests, from which the later derived significant benefit. Until the French were vanquished, Indians could not be ignored or pushed aside by either Europeans or their colonists. They were essential commercial and martial partners, who must be courted and given all due consideration.

On an institutional level, the army, as the main broker of state policy, sought to maintain formal relations with the natives. This involved establishing political/military alliances and trade connections that were inevitably infused by cultural stereotyping. More personally, soldier encountered warrior as ally and enemy, and this led to both social intermingling and brutal bloodletting. There is no doubting the feelings of difference that each felt for the other, but still communication between soldiers and Indians took place—conveyed through microbes, drink, sex, kinship, and hunting. Due to the nature of their congress, this being a time of warfare, they exchanged military tactics and cultural practices associated with warfare, often cruelly violent,
yet elemental human language ripe with promise of commonality and cooperation. With interests at root opposed to each other’s, it is no wonder that miscommunication and conflict frequently emerged between the British military and Indian tribes. The mutual misunderstanding was only translated into a discourse of British dominance and Native dependence at war’s end, however, when the defeat of the French and Spanish robbed them of alternative European allies, upsetting the diplomatic fulcrum upon which the middle ground acquired leverage, and allowing the British to impose upon them a less favorable client-patron relationship. The Indian war known as Pontiac’s Uprising constituted a rejection of this assertion of imperial sovereignty.

**Subaltern Resistance**

At war’s end in 1763, British leaders encoded three rules of territorial empire. First, indigenous peoples, as dependents of the empire, must not disturb the peace, should engage in the production and commercial exchange of staple commodities on market terms. Second, colonists should pay their fair share of colonial administration, particularly self-defense, abide by whatever trade and taxation policies Parliament set, and not move into the interior so as to encroach on Native lands. Third, territorial empire, more so than commercial empire, requires a military presence, an army that should be paid for out of revenues generated by the colonies, and manned by soldiers serving on the same terms as home troops. Indian war, incipient colonial revolt, and general mutiny resulted.

General Jeffrey Amherst, Commander in Chief of British forces in North America, never at ease with Native American combatants, implemented British policy that determined to place garrisons in the former French forts in Native lands, restricted trade with Indians to army forts, to terminated the trade in firearms and ammunition, and sought to do away with the practice of gift giving, instead seeking to impose upon them a more commercial model of economic exchange.
This frontal assault on the fundamentals of both diplomatic and economic relations in the middle ground war evoked pervasive dissatisfaction from native peoples; allies felt betrayed while former enemies resented the assumption that defeat of France somehow gave Britain the right to dictate terms. In the spring of 1763, the so-called Pontiac’s rebellion erupted. Tribal groups throughout the Ohio valley attacked and in most cases captured British posts. The outcome of the Indian War had been all but decided by the end of 1763, as natives suffered from a lack of firearms and ammunition, but fighting dragged on into 1765, an indication of their profound discontent for the new order of things.xxxix

Pontiac’s War can be conceived of as a colonialist struggle. Having lost their long term ally France as a result of the Treaty of Paris, these independent indigenous peoples were confronted by another European power, Britain, which claimed sovereignty over and stationed military garrisons in their lands, and imposed strict new trade relations upon them, all to be mediated through the army. Indians rejected British imperial claims and the vassal status this meant to them. The changing definition of empire was no abstraction to these people, but a threatening new political economy manifested in military posts. Ripping these tendrils of empire out did not uproot British imperium, however. Another colonial uprising resulting in revolution would eventually achieve this end, but from the native perspective put in its place an even more insidious expansionist power.

American colonists also soon became alienated from Britain’s postwar imperial settlement. Cooperation had marked the last few years of the war, while battlefield success cemented this fellow feeling. But the end of the war removed the basic need of cooperation, and awoke Britain to the fact that the massive wartime debt must be paid off. Furthermore, by choosing the lands of former New France over the Caribbean island of Martinique and Guadaloupe, Britain in effect opted for territorial over commercial empire, and thus substantially enhanced the extent of
possessions to be administered and defended. London looked to the colonies to pay part of the costs. In 1763, Parliament stated its intention to maintain 20 battalions of regulars in North America. To pay for this army, the government decided to apply a stamp tax on the colonies. Colonists perceived two grave assaults on their rights as Englishmen: the creation of a standing army; and the leveling of a direct tax, without colonial representation in Parliament. They responded by rioting and forming an inter-colonial congress to fight the Stamp Act in a crisis that is often seen as the first battle of the rebellion. The decision to station a standing army in the colonies marked a shift in thinking about the nature of Empire. No longer content with the fluid bonds of what Daniel Baugh termed a "maritime-imperial system," and determined to exert more control over her dominions by enforcing trade and settlement policies, Britain had opted for a military-territorial empire. Despite its imminent failure in the American colonies, this would remain the blueprint for global expansion into the 20th century. Defense of colonial territory and enforcement of colonial policy were the military watchwords of the new British Empire.

As for the unwitting instruments of these policies, the soldiers of the regular army, all was not sunny in the new dawn of the postwar era. Under pressure from the Treasury, the War Office moved to create a "New Establishment" by cutting the size of the army and making the remaining soldiers bear more of the burden of their support. In particular, the army decided to "stop" (or withhold) 4d. of a private’s daily earnings of 6d. to pay for provisions which had been freely supplied throughout the War. But other issues intruded, with the disbanding and reduction of regiments, the drafting of soldiers into other regiments, the ending of pay for extraordinary labor, concerns over reimbursement for uniforms bought but not issued, and the termination of provisioning for soldiers’ wives all playing a part. Moreover, the hard service and high mortality experienced in the West Indian campaigns of 1762 led soldiers to expect a reward and return to Britain, rather than reduced earnings and continued colonial exile. Regular soldiers
came from laboring classes experiencing the initial stages of industrialization, many from skilled backgrounds, and their experiences as workers, both before enlistment and as paid soldiers, informed their response to the changed economic relations imposed upon them by the army at war's end. Mutiny erupted from Newfoundland to Florida, as regular soldiers took up arms to fight against alterations to their wage and work conditions. As an unnamed soldier of the 60th Regiment brazenly proclaimed to the military governor of Quebec, James Murray: “Better to die on a gibbet! than to perish by inches!” This wave of rebelliousness would force Amherst to reduce the wage deductions, placating many of the troops, but mutiny raged on late into the spring of 1764. The mutineers finally yielded, albeit not before extracting further concessions from the King.

**Conclusion**

Indian war, colonial uprising and military mutiny mark the point at which the British Empire became modern, a transformation made possible by the warwork of the Seven Years’ War. This lecture has sought to demonstrate the army's role in the wider history of British imperial expansion. I have tried to provide a fresh reading of what has been called the first truly worldwide war, to treat the military as a central component of state expansion and to recast warfare as a form of economic accumulation, which in this instance connected the merchants of Britain to the Euro-American producers of the North American colonies, as well as their servants and slaves, and, beyond, to Native American peoples. Soldiers helped create and defend this marketplace of trade, theft, conflict, and social exchange. They paid the price of Empire by the pound of flesh or with the dying breath.

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governments of Europe were first and foremost, as they had been for generations, machines for waging war." M. S. Anderson, _War and Society in the Old Regime 1618-1789_ (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1988), 16. The right of states to exercise power monopolies arose through a process of state-formation. The centralization of fiscal-military monopoly to one authority, usually a monarch, constituted the first stage in the process, and was achieved by most European states by the mid 15th century. A key component of this stage was the state's struggle to assert exclusive control over the exercise of military power in their own lands, having to repress quasi-feudal claims to military rights. The second stage, covering much of the 16th and 17th centuries, involved internal power struggles over the extent of these powers, and ended with the acceptance of centralized authority. See: Peter H. Wilson, _German Armies: War and German Politics, 1648-1806_ (London: University College London Press, 1998), 7; Anderson, _War and Society_, 16, 29-30. To these two could be added a third stage roughly covering the "long" 18th century, in which newly consolidated states turned their attention outwards to international disputes over territory and imperial considerations. Both the scale of fighting and the extent of state control of the process grew markedly in the 17th and 18th centuries.

iii Roberts identified four interrelated developments: the tactical change from lance and pike to arrow and then musket, resulting in an absolute decline in firepower and consequent tactical deadlock; the expansion in the size of armies; the growing complexity of strategic thinking so as to marshal these larger forces, and the resultant need for greater training and discipline of soldiers ultimately leading to professional standing armies; and the greater social and economic impact, with greater costs, damages and associated bureaucratic developments. See the synopsis of the historiography in Geoffrey Parker, _The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500-1800_ (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988; 2nd ed. 1996), 1-2, and David Eltis, _The Military Revolution in Sixteenth-Century Europe_ (London: I. B. Tauris, 1995), 6-9.

iv As cannon fire overpowered the vertical defenses of castles, military engineers began building forts in the Italian style—with lower, thicker, angled walls, and gun towers that extended out at an angle from the walls to prevent flanking fire, complemented by outer defenses of ditches, casemates (pill-boxes) within the ditch, or triangular ravelins (detached bastions), or crownworks and hornworks (extensions to the fort walls). The adoption of volley firing, in which ranks of men fired in sequence, caused the battle line to be extended and thinned to maximize firepower and minimize the target. Maurice of Nassau pioneered this system, which required greater coordination and thus training and discipline, and contributed to the rise of professional armies. Improvements and greater reliance on artillery and musketeers or archers meant that infantry eclipsed cavalry and the size of armies mushroomed to maximize firepower. The middle decades of the eighteenth century marked the culmination of the military revolution. Parker, _Military Revolution_ 3-4, 10-11, 19-20, 24, 43, 149-51.

v Jeremy Black, disagreeing with Roberts and Parker, doubts that any military revolution occurred in early modern period, but more so belongs to the century following 1660. In the realm of weapons and tactics, this era was more significant, especially in the supplanting of the pike with the musket fitted with a bayonet, dating from the 1690s. He also believes that Parker overstated the wide adoption of the _trace italienne_ fortifications when it was in fact patchy. Jeremy Black, _A Military Revolution? Military Change and European Society 1550-1800_ (London: MacMillan, 1991), ix, 6-7, 20-22, 54.

vi Max Weber, in _Economy and Society_, maintained that it "was most often needs arising from the creation of standing armies called forth by power politics, and the development of financial systems connected with them, that more often than anything else has furthered the trend towards bureaucratization." Cited in Thomas Ertman, "The Sinews of Power and European State-Building Theory," in Lawrence Stone, ed., _An Imperial State at War: Britain from 1689 to 1815_ (London: Routledge, 1994), 34.

vii Brewer, _Sinews of Power_, 8.

viii Duffy, "Introduction," 1, 5-6. Jeremy Black again takes exception with these broad conclusions, maintaining that the rise of the absolutist state led to the military revolution, not vice versa. Armies in this period did not fly in the face of the status quo by challenging "the social realities of societies organised around the principles of inequality and inheritance... thus, the armies were not forces 'outside' society, but rather reflections of patterns of social control and influence and the beliefs that gave cohesion to these patterns." See Black, _A Military Revolution_, 93, 96. The military revolution also fostered significant state intervention in the economy, with the state becoming a large producer and consumer of goods and provisions, for example in the shipbuilding and construction industries, laying the foundations of industrialization in some countries. Others dispute the claims that military-state revolution laid the infrastructure of economic development leading to industrialization in a few key instances. M. S. Anderson maintains that war retarded economic growth by diverting capital and labor away from productive activities, although the soldiers were drawn from "the economically least valuable and least productive part of the population." Warfare did increase demand for some manufactured goods and provisions, but on the whole did not act as a catalyst in the coming of the Industrial Revolution. Anderson, _War and Society_, 139, 149-51, 155. John
Brewer concurs that a commercial economy such as England’s was more subject to dislocation by warfare. Brewer, The Sinews of Power: War, Money and the English State, 1688-1783 (London: Routledge, 1989), 178-82.

Military expenditure during the major wars of 1688-1783 amounted to 61-74% of public spending; and when costs of servicing debt are included, 75-85% of annual expenditure went to fund Britain’s war-making capabilities. Ibid., 40-41.

Elsewhere, Brewer has written that the proportion of British national income expended on the military roughly equated to that by Austria in third quarter the 18th century, and that at the peak of a major war the ratio of taxpayers to military effectives was 40:1, similar to other European military powers. See John Brewer, “The Eighteenth-Century British State: Context and Issues,” in Lawrence Stone, ed., An Imperial State at War: Britain from 1689 to 1815 (London: Routledge, 1994), 57.

Brewer disagrees with Charles Tilly and allied historians that the state developed as a reflex of warfare and that states with large standing armies are likely to be more highly organized whereas those that have more commercialized economies are less likely to develop strong state structures. This clearly is contradicted by Brewer, whose work indicates that the most commercial of nations was also quite advanced in terms of state bureaucracy and military expenditure. See Ertman, “Sinews of Power,” 38-39.

Brewer’s model, for example, applies less adroitly outside the British Isles in the developing Empire. He in part recognizes this fact when he notes that, however successful at home, the fiscal aspect of fiscal-military state did not obtain in the colonies, as witnessed by the failure to raise revenues in the American colonies after the Seven Years’ War. The centralized English state, highly organized bureaucracy and legitimacy afforded state actions could not be imported. Ibid., 117-19.

It has long been considered a seminal period in Anglo-American history. The key text on the imperial significance of the war is Lawrence Henry Gipson’s magisterial The British Empire before the American Revolution, especially Vol. 6, The Great War for the Empire: The Years of Defeat, 1754-1757 (Orig. ed. 1946; New York: Knopf, 1956), Vol. 8, The Great War for the Empire: The Culmination, 1760-1763 (New York: Knopf, 1953), and Vol. 9, The Triumphant Empire: New Responsibilities within the Enlarged Empire 1763-1766 (New York: Knopf, 1956). The argument that the war set the stage for the Revolution centers on the revenue legislation passed by Parliament in hopes of recouping the war debt incurred in the conflict, and is so broadly accepted to to have diffused throughout historical writing. For a reappraisal, see Jack P. Greene, “The Seven Years’ War and the American Revolution: The Causal Relationship Reconsidered,” in Peter Marshall and Glyn Williams, eds., The British Atlantic Empire Before the American Revolution (London, 1980), pp.? For some time the war has been eclipsed by the Revolution in historical consciousness, but recently has receive renewed attention. Fred Anderson is in large part responsible for this renaissance, dating to his A People’s Army and culminating in the massive tome Crucible of War. More recently, Kathleen Wilson has called the war “Britain’s greatest imperial effort” in the eighteenth century, "the fulfillment and ultimate expression of mercantilist imperial aspirations.” Wilson, “Empire of Virtue: The
Belonging to the Army: Camp Followers and Community during the American Revolution. Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Merchant Seamen, Pirates, and the Anglo-American Maritime World, 1700-1750

M. S. Anderson argues that the distinction between soldiers and civilians became more pronounced in the eighteenth century, as expressed physically in the building of special living spaces for the former. And the soldier, making the financial arrangement at opaque process subject to officerly malfeasance and soldier disgruntlement. Steppler, "Common Soldier," chapter 2.

Yet Andre Corvisier reminds us that an etymological root of the word soldier (like soldowe, soudard, and soldato) is one who is paid a wage (or solde) to fight. Andre Corvisier, Armies and Societies in Europe, 1474-1789, trans. Abigail T. Siddall (orig. ed. 1976; Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1979), 184.

Yet the matter was hardly this straightforward, for many factors intervened between the Exchequer and the soldier, making the financial arrangement at opaque process subject to officerly malfeasance and soldier disgruntlement. Steppler, "Common Soldier," chapter 2.

Holly A. Mayer has recently documented the experience of the entire “community” that attached itself to the Continental Army in the Revolution. Belonging to the Army: Camp Followers and Community during the American Revolution (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1996).

In a similar way, Marcus Rediker has argued for sailors that a “specifically maritime occupational consciousness gradually moved toward class consciousness as seamen began to develop wider patterns of association, sympathy, and identification.” Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Merchant Seamen, Pirates, and the Anglo-American Maritime World, 1700-1750 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 291.

This seemingly ahistorical “puzzle” forms the basis of Joshua Goldstein’s multi-disciplinary review of the literature on warfare and gender, Gender and War: How Gender Shapes the War System and Vice Versa (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), esp. chap. 1. By comparison, Marcia Kovitz argues against “a universal gender division of labor in war,” although hers is a much narrower study while her definition of what constitutes warfare is broader than the combat definition embraced by Goldstein. In the end, she would agree with the latter that fighting has almost universally been a masculine role in the military. See Kovitz, “The Roots of Military Masculinity,” in Paul R. Higate, ed., Military Masculinities: Identity and the State (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003), 3-5.


Pro-war lobbyists in early 1750s England revived and broadcasted the image of the French as authoritarian, expansionist, un-trustworthy, and thus a threat to the empire as a means of stoking the fires of war, while also lamenting the incursions French effeminacy had made amongst the English nobility. Wilson, "Empire of Virtue,” 136, 144-48.

A precise representation of the ethnic composition of the army can be achieved by collating the regimental reports ordered by Loudoun in 1757. These documents (found in the Loudoun Papers, North American Series, Huntington Library, San Marino California) report the nativity of all non-commissioned officers and privates for virtually the entire army in America. The English born accounted for 30.3% of the whole, while Scots amounted to 27.8%, Irish 27.2%, and continental Europeans for 4.4%. More significantly, colonials made up 4.9% of the army, while foreign-born residents of America equalled 5.4%; making the American contingent over 10%, or conversely, the European contribution just under 10%. Return of the 2nd Battalion of 1st Regiment, 12 July 1757, LO 4011, no. 1, Box 90; General Return of First Highland Battalion, 18 Sept. 1757, LO 6695, Box 99; Return of 17th Regiment,
discipline and morality, concludes that colonial soldiers were a distinct group from the British regular, and that this influenced the way they waged war—as a people’s arm y rather than as soldiers of the king. Anderson, A People’s
this communalism.

a result of the repression of the clans in their homeland and the opportunity the military offered for a reassertion of clannishness; and here I use the term in its original meaning, as the flooding of Highlanders into the army was largely a result of the repression of the clans in their homeland and the opportunity the military offered for a reassertion of this communalism.

Fred Anderson, using Massachusetts’s provincial army as his study group, and the disputes over rank, discipline and morality, concludes that colonial soldiers were a distinct group from the British regular, and that this influenced the way they waged war—as a people’s army rather than as soldiers of the king. Anderson, A People’s

Army. This conclusion ignores the distinctiveness of Massachusetts’ colonists, and, as John Shy points out, by concentrating on the war’s early years when more conflict was evident, rather than the later years when victories and treasury funds soothed ruffled colonial feathers, overstates the cultural rupture that had occurred in the war. John Shy, “The American Colonies in War and Revolution, 1748-1783,” in Marshall, Eighteenth Century, 306, n. 16.

Roots of Conflict?

The tendency of Scots to cluster resulted from their being recruited en masse, but also from their clannishness; and here I use the term in its original meaning, as the flooding of Highlanders into the army was largely a result of the repression of the clans in their homeland and the opportunity the military offered for a reassertion of this communalism.

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Army. This conclusion ignores the distinctiveness of Massachusetts’ colonists, and, as John Shy points out, by concentrating on the war’s early years when more conflict was evident, rather than the later years when victories and treasury funds soothed ruffled colonial feathers, overstates the cultural rupture that had occurred in the war. John Shy, “The American Colonies in War and Revolution, 1748-1783,” in Marshall, Eighteenth Century, 306, n. 16.

Roots of Conflict?

The “New Indian History” of the past 20 years has emphasized complex economic and social interaction, mutual dependence, and the achievement of a balance of power between Natives and Europeans in what Richard White terms “the middle ground.” “The Middle Ground is the place in between: in between cultures, peoples, and in between empires and the nonstate world of villages,” according to Richard White. Accommodation took place because whites for a long time could neither force Indians to do their will nor ignore them. But accommodation eventually broke down as whites gained the upper hand and proceeded again to define natives as “the other,” making it easier to dispossess them. See The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes region, 1650-1815 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), x. See also: James H. Merrell, “Some Thoughts on Colonial Historians and American Indians,” William and Mary Quarterly, third series, vol. 44, no. 1 (Jan. 1989), 94-119; Bruce G. Trigger, “The Historians’ Indian: Native Americans in Canadian Historical Writing from Charlevoix to the Present,” Canadian Historical Review, vol. 67, no. 3 (Sept. 1986), 315-342; J. R. Miller, Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens: A History of Indian-White Relations in Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989); James Merrell, Indians’ New World: Catawbas and their Neighbors from European Contact through the Era of Removal (Norton); Daniel H. Usner, Jr., Indians, Settlers, and Slaves in a Frontier Exchange Economy: The Lower Mississippi Valley before 1783 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992); Daniel K. Richter, The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992); Gregory Dowd, A Spirited Resistance: North American Indian Struggle for Unity, 1745-1815 (Johns Hopkins); Olive Patricia Dickason, Canada’s First Nations: A History of Founding Peoples from Earliest Times (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1992); Tom Hatley, The Dividing Paths: Cherokees and South Carolinians through the Era of Revolution (Oxford); Michael McConnell, A Country Between: the Upper Ohio Valley and its Peoples, 1724-1774 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1992). The desire of these historians to demonstrate Indians’ partial control over the course of imperial and national expansion, postponing decline to the post-revolutionary era, underestimates the extent to which eastern Indians had already been absorbed into or reduced to de facto clients of the Empire by mid-eighteenth century, with the conclusion of the Seven Years’ War an important event in this process.

The Treaty of Paris brought to Britain from France Canada and Cape Breton in North America, Tobago, Grenada, St. Vincent and Dominica in the Caribbean, Senegal (in exchange for Gore’e) in West Africa, and an acknowledgment of supremacy in India in return for Chathambar and Pondicherry; from Spain she received Florida.


John L. Bullion, “Security and Economy: The Bute Administration’s Plans for the American Army and Revenue, 1762-1763,” William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd ser.. vol. 45, no. 3 (July 1988), 499-504; quotation on page 503. Peter D. G. Thomas points out that the size of the army in America did not maintain a level of 10,000 men and 20 battalions, but was reduced from 1765 to 15 battalions and 7500 men, and gradually downward from 1770 to
1773 when there were 13 battalions and 6200 troops, where it remained until the outbreak of war. See "The Cost of the British Army in North America, 1763-1775," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., vol. 45, no. 3 (July 1988), 510-16. Bullion and Thomas disagree about the annual costs of this military force, but agree that concerns about the expense led to direct taxation of the colonies.

xli Amherst to Murray, 30 July 1763, WO34/3/200.

xlii Paul Kopperman narrowly focused on the stoppages issue, except for one reference to the drafting of soldiers into new regiments. John Shy in his brief account of the mutiny does make allowance for the discontent caused amongst soldiers who were due their discharge but were being maintained in the army. Kopperman, "The Stoppages Mutiny of 1763," *Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine*, vol. 69, no. 93 (1986), 241-54 (reference to drafted soldiers on p. 251, n. 30); Shy, *Toward Lexington: The Role of the British Army in the Coming of the American Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), 118-20.

xliii The speech of this soldier, reputedly the mutiny’s leader at Quebec, was recorded in the memoirs of James Miller, a soldier in the 15th Regiment present during events, which were sent to Jeffery Amherst in 1792. Memoirs of an Invalid, p. 81, Amherst Papers, U1350 Z9A, Centre for Kentish Studies, Maidstone, England.